BUSINESS

Winchester's Emily Chou crafts Dear Botanicals artisan soap from home

CHARLENE BAND | CONTRIBUTOR

September 29, 2025 . 1:00 PM — 2 min read

Emily Chou examines each bar of soap to make sure it's perfect for her business, Dear Botanicals. COURTESY PHOTO/EMILY CHOU

Did you know there are more than 15 women-owned businesses Winchester? Offerings range from books, hair salons, gifts, classe

Subscribe

and pottery, fashion, flowers, a restaurant, old-fashioned candy and novelties, and a bakery-café.

While these businesses are in store fronts, there is one homebased and unique operation. Dear Botanicals handmade artisan soap!

Owner Emily Chou hails from Canada, where she worked as a TV producer. Her husband, a scientist, had a job opportunity in Boston and they moved to Winchester in 2010.

Subscribe

Dear Botanicals product display at the Winchester Farmers Market. COURTESY PHOTO/EMILY CHOU

After their two daughters were born, Emily said she was "looking for something new and different in the creative field." Out of curiosity, she explored soap making. Why not? That certainly fit within the different and creative categories! And she knew it would be fun!

Subscribe

Emily manufactures 100% natural cold-process handmade artisan soap bars. It requires few ingredients: a combination of olive or coconut oil, lye, fragrance, and colorants.

The "recipe" sounds simple, yes? No! Each oil has unique properties, must be carefully measured, and the exact amount is necessary to result in the chemical reaction of oil and lye that is needed to create soap.

Donate today!

When the mixture is ready, it is poured into molds to solidify and cure for four to six weeks before it is cut into bars.

"Being born and raised by my Taiwanese immigrant parents, and inspired by Taiwanese culture, I created Dear Botanicals to celebrate my heritage," Emily says.

After launching Dear Botanicals, her products were sold online at Etsy. As her business grew, she expanded her client base to boutique shops in Lexington, Dorchester, Boston, Cambridge, Marblehead, and several others.

Subscribe

Examples of soap fragrances available at Dear Botanicals. COURTESY PHOTO/EMILY CHOU

Product offerings were expanded as well and now include face and lip care as well as accessories. Products are beautifully packaged and are a unique and special gift.

At the end of my conversation with Emily, I had a question for her daughters: "What is it like to have a mother who is a successful businesswoman?"

Seven-year-old Emilia did a little swirl and said, "Good." Julia, 10, thoughtfully said, "It's different from most jobs."

Winchester News is a non-profit organization supported by our community. If you appreciate having local Winchester news, please donate to support our work, and subscribe to our free weekly new

Subscribe

Copyright 2025 Winchester News Group, Inc. Copying and sharing with written permission only.

Related

BUSINESS

Winchester Co-operative Bank donates $10,000 towards youth programs

The following was submitted by Winchester Co-operative Bank: Winchester Co-operative Bank (WCB) is proud to announce a $10,000 donation to the North Suburban YMCA. This contribution will support the YMCA's important work in fostering youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility in our community. This donation highlights our

September 2, 2025

BUSINESS

Winchester residents among 21 local youths to gain hands-on experience at Cummings

The following was submitted by Cummings Properties: Twenty-one local students will return to school this fall with new practical skills and professional experience after a summer at Cummings Properties, including Winchester residents Jack Mackey and Ella Matule. Each year, the Woburn-based firm provides young adults from high school to graduate

August 26, 2025

Subscribe

BUSINESS

Lucia's celebrates 40 years in Winchester

Picture it: Aug. 1, 1985, downtown Winchester. Everyone was eagerly awaiting the grand opening of a new North End Italian restaurant right on Mount Vernon Street. There was food, there were limousines...and there was Jay Leno. That's right, Jay Leno kicked off the festivities when Filippo and Anna

NELL ESCOBAR COAKLEY | STAFF WRITER
August 25, 2025

NEARBY

Conquer Ninja Gym opens first Mass. location in Woburn

The following was submitted by Conquer Ninja Gyms: Local families and fitness enthusiasts have a convenient new destination for active fun. Conquer Ninja Gyms, a national brand in "ninja warrior" obstacle training, has opened its first East Coast location at 10 Gill St. in Woburn. Inspired by the hit TV

August 21, 2025

Latest

NEWS

Winchester School Committee candidates bring contrasting

FEATURES

'Chicago: Teen Editio onto the Winchester High School

Subscribe

backgrounds to Thursday forum

Two candidates for Winchester's School Committee will face voters at a forum as the district navigates a new literacy curriculum, budget pressures and questions about student mental health. Heather von Mering and John Bellaire are competing for an open seat on the School Committee, which oversees a budget von

WILL DOWD | STAFF WRITER

March 4, 2026

stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents "Chicago: Teen Edition," a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. Set in the 1920s, this iconic production is sure to leave the audience wanting more. Performances will

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

March 4, 2026

EVENTS

Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents 'Syldason: You Are Welcome Here'

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

March 4, 2026

NEWS

Rep. Michael Day helps House colleagues pass sweeping energy affordability bill

The following was submitted by the Office of Rep. Michael S. Day: Rep. Michael S. Day and his colleagues in the House of Representatives recently passed energy affordability legislation that would result in over $9 billion in savings for utility ratepayers over the next 10 years. The bill maintains critical

March 4, 2026

Subscribe

Subscribe to Winchester News

© 2026 Winchester News Group, Inc. Copying and sharing with permission for non-commercial use only.

Subscribe